

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
BOARD MEETING SESSION – DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY
SEPTEMBER 24, 2013**

ITEM 5

SUBJECT

INFORMATIONAL ITEM ON NATIONAL WATER QUALITY INITIATIVE PROJECTS

DISCUSSION

In 2012, the United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA - NRCS) issued a notice regarding a National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) to build more effective partnerships with federal agencies, state agencies, and Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Together, these agencies and districts are to identify priority watersheds where on-farm conservation investments will deliver the greatest water quality improvement benefits. Eligible producers receive assistance under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for installing conservation systems that may include practices such as nutrient management, cover crops, conservation cropping systems, filter strips, terraces, and in some cases, edge-of-field water quality monitoring. NWQI targets small watersheds with streams or water bodies that have been categorized as impaired.

This Information Item will provide a presentation by the multi-agency team that identified and selected projects in the Calleguas Creek and Salt River watersheds that were funded by NWQI. The criteria for the NWQI project selection dovetailed very nicely with State Water Resources Control Board and Regional Water Quality Control Board Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program and Nonpoint Source Program activities, which provided an advantage for California in the USDA-NRCS project selection and funding process.

POLICY ISSUE

None at this time. Informational item only.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT

None.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

This is an informational Item with no staff recommendation.

State Water Board action on this item will assist the State Water Board in reaching goals one and two of the Strategic Workplan Update: 2008-2012 to (1) Implement strategies to fully support the beneficial uses for all 2006-listed water bodies by 2030 and (2) improve and protect groundwater quality in high-use basins by 2030. It also implements our principle of collaboration: "We share information, leverage funding, and seek mutual solutions, including integrated approaches, to complex water challenges through collaboration, cooperation, data-sharing, and partnerships within the Water Boards and with tribes, other agencies and jurisdictions, stakeholders, and other members of the public."